

Builder Dropped By Shipping Board; Opposed Goethals

Altercation Reported When McGhee Met the General in His Office

(From The Tribune Bureau)

Washington, May 31.—J. E. McGhee, head naval constructor in the New York Navy Yard, who has been employed by the Shipping Board for the past several weeks in mobilizing skilled labor for the wooden ship programme, after what is described as an altercation with General Goethals, was to-day discharged from the employ of the Shipping Board. The aftermath of Mr. McGhee's discharge, it is said, may be a deathblow to the wooden ship programme, of which General Goethals has been an unwilling executor.

The outstanding difficulty with wooden ship plans from the first has been skilled labor. Even though the "birds were nesting in the trees," there were plenty of trees. Green lumber can be improvised into ships, but even the combined genius of Denman and Goethals

cannot improvise shipwrights. Realizing this, the Shipping Board employed Mr. McGhee, an influential labor man, to attempt an affiliation of the 18,000 union shipwrights in the country with the more than 200,000 union carpenters. This was no easy task, for shipwrights and carpenters do not "mix," though both trades are unionized.

It was said that Mr. McGhee had made considerable progress in accomplishing a sort of amalgamation between the shipwrights and carpenters in the interest of the war. What Mr. McGhee lacked in the gentle art of diplomacy he had compensated for in force of personality. At a meeting in Brooklyn only last week, called for the purpose of advancing the proposed affiliation of shipwrights and carpenters, when a prominent shipworker voiced objection to the arrangement on the ground that it meant the admission of more men into the trade than the market demand would give employment, Mr. McGhee rushed to the front of the platform and told the objector that, "like it or not like it, he would have to take it, for the government was not inviting people to its bidding; it was commanding them." And, according to reports, Mr. McGhee was born.

But the same aggressiveness and directness which have measured Mr. McGhee's influence in labor circles were a bit out of place in the office of General Goethals. The executive head of the shipping corporation is quite a reputation for aggressiveness and directness himself. In fact, this is the case to such a degree that last week when a United States Senator charged that Chairman Denman of the Shipping Board had coerced General Goethals into building wooden ships, Mr. Denman wanted a Congressional medal on the ground that any one who could coerce General Goethals deserved a place on the honor rolls.

Washington, May 31.—The Navy Department is having constructed all the destroyers that the shipyards of the country can take, Secretary of the Navy Daniels said to-day. This announcement was made in reply to the criticism made in a letter, said to have been written by an American naval officer, made public by Justice Townsend Scudder, of Brooklyn.

The officer criticised the policies of the British and American governments by inference, asserting that lies were being given out to conceal the true situation created by the successful submarine operations, and he declared the United States ought to send to Europe to fight the U-boat campaign at least two hundred destroyers.

It was said that only recently one concern at Newport News was finally induced to build destroyers for the navy, and that he preferred to do so at a cost of \$1 million.

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General Goethals did not discuss the recent differences of opinion between himself and Chairman Denman of the board over the relative value of building steel or wooden ships. He spent a seven-hour excursion by consent, leaving a number of hours at the White House.

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"There has been unquestionable irregularities. This juror Kelly is improperly in the box. I don't accuse him or any one because I have not received sufficient information on the subject to suspect any person of wilful misconduct in this matter. But in the interest of justice I will excuse Kelly and allow both sides to exercise their rights in the selection of jurors."

Ferrari said to-night that "should Judge Seawall deny our formal motion to discharge the jury, the prosecution will elect to try Mrs. Mooney on a different indictment from the one on which the present trial is proceeding."

He added that the new trial would be on the indictment charging Mrs. Mooney with the murder of Mrs. Hetta Knapp, one of the bomb victims. The present indictment charges her with the murder of Mrs. Myrtle Irene Van Loon.

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